

An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna
Department of Education and Skills

**Subject Inspection in Social Personal and Health Education
(SPHE), including Relationships and Sexuality Education**

REPORT

Ainm na scoile / School name	Presentation Secondary School
Seoladh na scoile / School address	Listowel Co Kerry
Uimhir rolla / Roll number	61380H

Date of Inspection: 10-05-2019



SUBJECT INSPECTION

Subject Inspections report on the quality of work in individual curriculum areas within a school. They affirm good practice and make recommendations, where appropriate, to aid the further development of the subject in the school.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

During this inspection, the inspector evaluated learning and teaching in Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE), including Relationships and Sexuality Education, under the following headings:

1. Teaching, learning and assessment
2. Subject provision and whole-school support
3. Planning and preparation

Inspectors describe the quality of each of these areas using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown on the final page of this report. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision in each area.

The board of management of the school was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report, and the response of the board will be found in the appendix of this report.

CHILD PROTECTION

During the inspection visit, the following checks in relation to the school's child protection procedures were conducted:

1. The name of the DLP and the Child Safeguarding Statement are prominently displayed near the main entrance to the school.
2. The Child Safeguarding Statement has been ratified by the board and includes an annual review and a risk assessment.
3. All teachers visited reported that they have read the Child Safeguarding Statement and that they are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons.

The school met the requirements in relation to each of the checks above.

SUBJECT INSPECTION

INSPECTION ACTIVITIES

Dates of inspection	09 May and 10 May 2019
Inspection activities undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of relevant documents• Discussion with principal and key staff• Interaction with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation of teaching and learning during three class periods• Examination of students' work• Feedback to principal and relevant staff

School context

Presentation Secondary School, Listowel is an all-girls, voluntary secondary school. Current enrolment is 331. Upon completion of Junior Cycle, students may opt for the Transition Year (TY) programme, the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA), the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) or the Leaving Certificate Established (LCE).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Findings

- The quality of teaching is very good and, overall, very good quality learning was facilitated in lessons.
- Students maintain subject files or log their learning in workbooks, although at times, these did not provide a comprehensive record of participation and learning.
- Good attention was paid to assessment of and for learning within lessons; further work is required in relation to determining individual student's overall progress and achievement in SPHE.
- SPHE is a highly regarded aspect of the curriculum, and related provision and support is very good; at whole-school level, there is a very carefully planned supporting programme of related initiatives and activities.
- Parents are notified in advance of the delivery of RSE, but school reports do not currently provide details of students' progress and achievement in SPHE.
- The planning work of the SPHE and RSE teachers, including programme planning, is of a high quality; planning for the SPHE short course needs further development.

Recommendations

- Students need to be further supported to maintain comprehensive participation and learning records, to include activities designed to promote individual reflection on learning.
- Teachers should consider how students' overall progress and achievement in SPHE will be determined and, with management's support, how related outcomes can be meaningfully reported to parents.
- The templates provided by Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) should further inform planning for the SPHE short course specification.

DETAILED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TEACHING, LEARNING, AND ASSESSMENT

- The quality of teaching is very good and, overall, very good quality student learning was facilitated in lessons.
- Teachers demonstrated confidence and ease in their role as teachers of SPHE, and their approach to teaching the subject was well informed by the experiential learning process.
- The plan for the lesson was shared with students using a set of carefully considered and well-constructed learning intentions. Learning intentions should be revisited with students at key junctures or at lesson end, and used to flag achievements or demonstrate learning respectively. At this point, teachers could begin to explore the use of differentiated learning intentions.
- Classroom atmosphere was most positive, with good relations evident and high levels of mutual respect and trust apparent. Teachers were highly inclusive of all students and well supported in their efforts by special needs assistants (SNAs) who worked to foster students' independence and to promote their social skills.
- Significant efforts were made by teachers across lessons to put students at ease, to demonstrate empathy, and to heighten the relevance of the subject matter under exploration. This was achieved through, for example: the inclusion of ice breakers; an appropriate sharing of personal anecdotes; and the incorporation of popular songs respectively.
- Teachers expertly blended resources in order to enhance students' experience and outcomes. As a result, it was suggested that the requirement on students to purchase a SPHE textbook be discussed at subject department level.
- There was a heightened emphasis in all lessons on key words, alongside a very thorough approach to unpacking relevant terminology with students.
- The approach to topic exploration was highly student centred, with teachers providing activities that promoted very good levels of student participation and engagement. Engagement was enhanced when there were three or four different requirements placed on students over the course of each lesson, and where related tasks sought to accommodate students' preferred and varied learning styles.
- Opportunities to learn together and from one another were also provided in all lessons. Related tasks were well organised, managed, monitored and, overall, they were also processed effectively. In the interest of facilitating all-student involvement, the importance of assigning individual roles to students during group work was emphasised.
- Provision for assessment of students' learning was apparent in all lessons. This happened either organically through planned lesson activities or at lesson end. Related advice offered to teachers included the following: learning that occurs organically needs to be explicitly highlighted to students; and lesson summaries should include provision for a review of learning.
- While it is positive that students are encouraged to maintain subject files or to log learning in workbooks, at times these did not provide a comprehensive record of students' year-long participation and learning in SPHE. Students need to be further supported to maintain such records, which should include activities designed to promote individual student reflections on learning.

- Classrooms walls featured many fine examples of good quality work completed by students as part of SPHE.

2. SUBJECT PROVISION AND WHOLE SCHOOL SUPPORT

- SPHE is a highly regarded aspect of the curriculum, and management's provision and support for SPHE, including RSE, is very good.
- The timetabling of SPHE in junior cycle significantly exceeds the required minimum, and provision for RSE is appropriately accommodated within SPHE. Timetabling of senior cycle RSE is also consistent with published guidelines.
- The approach to the deployment of teachers of SPHE has been modified recently, resulting in the formation of a core team of SPHE teachers. It is recommended that during the construction of future timetables management seek to avoid the sharing of class groups between teachers.
- From next September, management is prioritising provision for continuity of teacher from first year to third year, and this planned provision is highly commended.
- All of the teachers currently involved in the teaching of SPHE are interested in the subject and are keen to avail of opportunities to support related professional learning. Building on the many relevant professional development activities undertaken, further consideration ought to be given to the SPHE and RSE specific training provided annually by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST).
- Teachers, both within the SPHE department and across other subjects, are well supported by management in planning and providing a wide range of initiatives and activities aimed at promoting students' personal, social and health education, in the greatest sense of the word. Related provision, which is very carefully planned, is both rich and varied. Events should be documented in programme plans to inform when relevant subject matter is delivered.
- Almost all of the key supporting school policies have been ratified by the board, with work underway in relation to the preparation of a policy to guide teachers in the use of external facilitators and programmes.
- Communication with parents in relation to RSE is well accommodated, with all parents being notified in advance of the delivery of relevant modules. SPHE is currently not included in school reports; as this will be required in the near future, both teachers and management need to consider how this will be meaningfully facilitated.

3. PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- The planning work of the SPHE and RSE subject teachers is of a high quality, and related work benefits from high levels of teacher collaboration, collegiality, and support.
- A comprehensive subject plan exists. Particularly positive elements include the preparation of end-of-year reports and the regular facilitation of student evaluations. Both indicate that teachers reflect and review in the interest of developing the subject and improving students' experiences and outcomes. Further facilitation of students' evaluation of their RSE experience is encouraged, as this will help to ensure the validity and value of the programme into the future.
- Programme plans are in place for SPHE in junior cycle and also for RSE in TY, the LCE and LCA. Fifth-year and sixth-year RSE programmes should clearly identify the aspects covered in

each individual year group, and the programme content of both LCE and LCA RSE programmes should be reviewed so as to ensure that students receive a similar RSE experience.

- Planning for the implementation of the SPHE short course specification is underway. It would be valuable to standardise the overall approach to programme planning across the three years of junior cycle. The templates provided by the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) should also inform future approaches to relevant programme planning. Documentation of planning for assessment requires particular attention and development.
- The quality of planning and preparation for observed lessons was very good.

The draft findings and recommendations arising out of this evaluation were discussed with the principal and subject teachers at the conclusion of the evaluation.

THE INSPECTORATE'S QUALITY CONTINUUM

Inspectors describe the quality of provision in the school using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown below. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the of quality the school's provision of each area.

Level	Description	Example of descriptive terms
Very Good	Very good applies where the quality of the areas evaluated is of a very high standard. The very few areas for improvement that exist do not significantly impact on the overall quality of provision. For some schools in this category the quality of what is evaluated is outstanding and provides an example for other schools of exceptionally high standards of provision.	Very good; of a very high quality; very effective practice; highly commendable; very successful; few areas for improvement; notable; of a very high standard. Excellent; outstanding; exceptionally high standard, with very significant strengths; exemplary
Good	Good applies where the strengths in the areas evaluated clearly outweigh the areas in need of improvement. The areas requiring improvement impact on the quality of pupils' learning. The school needs to build on its strengths and take action to address the areas identified as requiring improvement in order to achieve a <i>very good</i> standard.	Good; good quality; valuable; effective practice; competent; useful; commendable; good standard; some areas for improvement
Satisfactory	Satisfactory applies where the quality of provision is adequate. The strengths in what is being evaluated just outweigh the shortcomings. While the shortcomings do not have a significant negative impact they constrain the quality of the learning experiences and should be addressed in order to achieve a better standard.	Satisfactory; adequate; appropriate provision although some possibilities for improvement exist; acceptable level of quality; improvement needed in some areas
Fair	Fair applies where, although there are some strengths in the areas evaluated, deficiencies or shortcomings that outweigh those strengths also exist. The school will have to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is satisfactory or better.	Fair; evident weaknesses that are impacting on pupils' learning; less than satisfactory; experiencing difficulty; must improve in specified areas; action required to improve
Weak	Weak applies where there are serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated. Immediate and coordinated whole-school action is required to address the areas of concern. In some cases, the intervention of other agencies may be required to support improvements.	Weak; unsatisfactory; insufficient; ineffective; poor; requiring significant change, development or improvement; experiencing significant difficulties;

Appendix

SCHOOL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

Submitted by the Board of Management

Part A Observations on the content of the inspection report

The Board is very pleased that this inspection has affirmed the following:

- The quality of teaching is very good and, overall, very good quality learning was facilitated in lessons.
- SPHE is a highly regarded aspect of the curriculum, and related provision and support is very good, at whole-school level. There is a very carefully planned supporting programme of related initiatives and activities.
- Parents are notified in advance of the delivery of RSE
- The planning work of the SPHE and RSE teachers, including programme planning, is of a high quality.

Part B Follow-up actions planned or undertaken since the completion of the inspection activity to implement the findings and recommendations of the inspection.

Recommendations

- Students need to be further supported to maintain comprehensive participation and learning records, to include activities designed to promote individual reflection on learning.

The SPHE core team will meet to discuss this recommendation and to plan appropriately.

- Teachers should consider how students' overall progress and achievement in SPHE will be determined and, with management's support, how related outcomes can be meaningfully reported to parents.

We are currently reviewing our assessment policy in light of the new Junior Cycle. This recommendation will be addressed as part of this review.

- The templates provided by Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) should further inform planning for the SPHE short course specification.

The SPHE core team will use the templates going forward.